

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03
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COME-00 EB-08 FRB-03 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03
LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 OES-09 /102 W
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R 280503Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6138
INFO SECDEF WASHDC
CNO WASHDC
CINCPAC HONOLULU
CINCPACFLT PEARL HARBOR HI
COMSEVENTHFLT
COMTHIRDFLT
USS HORNE
AMCONSUL AUCKLAND BY POUCH

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 WELLINGTON 04559

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD AND ICA ADVISER

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TAGS: PINR, MARR, MNUC, ECON, EINV, EFIS, ETRD, EAIR,
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SUBJECT: NEW COOK ISLANDS PREMIER OUTLINES POLICIES
- FAVORABLE TO U.S.

REF: (A) USS HORNE DTG 100800Z AUG 78 (NOTAL);
- (B) WELLINGTON 04538 (NOTAL); (C) WELLINGTON 02500
- (NOTAL); (D) WELLINGTON 03910 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: IN HIS FIRST OFFICIAL VISIT TO NEW ZEALAND, THE
NEW COOK ISLANDS PREMIER, DR. TOM DAVIS, OUTLINED A SERIES
OF POLICIES, INCLUDING A NUMBER FAVORABLE TO THE U.S.
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DAVIS CALLED FOR AMERICAN INVESTMENT, PARTICULARLY IN
FISHING AND MANUFACTURING, AND WELCOMED U.S. NAVAL VISITS,
INCLUDING NUCLEAR POWERED VESSELS. FOR UP-DATED BIO-
GRAPHIC INFORMATION, SEE PARA 7. END SUMMARY.

1. THE RECENT "GETTING TO KNOW YOU" VISIT TO NEW ZEALAND
OF THE NEW COOK ISLANDS PREMIER, DR. TOM DAVIS, RESULTED

IN A WARM WELCOME BY THE N.Z. PUBLIC, PRESS, AND OFFICIAL-DOM. ALL HEAVED A SIGH OF RELIEF TO BE RID OF THE IRASCIBLE DEPOSED PREMIER, SIR ALBERT HENRY, WHO HAD CONSTANTLY BAITED THE GNZ AND IRRITATED N.Z. TAXPAYERS WHO PROP UP THE COOK ISLANDS' SAGGING ECONOMY.

2. DAVIS' ANNOUNCED PURPOSE WAS TO REAFFIRM THE COOK ISLANDS' POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP WITH NEW ZEALAND, TO MAKE THE ACQUAINTANCE OF PEOPLE IN GOVERNMENT AND BUSINESS CIRCLES CONCERNED WITH THE COOK ISLANDS, AND TO PRESENT A SURVEY OF HIS GOVERNMENT'S NEW ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM. REGARDING THE POLITICAL RELATIONSHIP, DAVIS TOLD THE PRESS HE WAS NOT INTERESTED IN INDEPENDENCE, FOR WITHOUT ECONOMIC VIABILITY IT WOULD MEAN VERY LITTLE. HIS GOVERNMENT'S PROGRAM IS ONE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, DAVIS DECLARED. THE NEW PREMIER, HOWEVER, AVOIDED MAKING IMMEDIATE REQUESTS FOR INCREASED NEW ZEALAND AID AND ESCHEWED THE POLITICAL RHETORIC WHICH MARKED HIS PREDECESSOR BECAUSE HE SAID HE BELIEVES THAT A SYSTEMATICALLY PRESENTED CASE WILL GET A FAVORABLE RESPONSE.

3. DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM:

THE PROGRAM PRESENTED BY DR. DAVIS ANNOUNCES THE GOVERNMENT'S INTENTION TO FORMULATE THE "COOK ISLANDS FIRST CONFIDENTIAL

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DEVELOPMENT PLAN (FDP)," WHICH WILL HAVE AS ITS GOAL ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GREATEST DEGREE OF SELF-RELIANCE POSSIBLE FOR THE ISLANDS, CONSISTENT WITH THE AVAILABLE RESOURCES. PROCEEDING FROM THE PREMISE THAT PEOPLE, NOT GOVERNMENTS, BUILD A NATION, THE POLICY OUTLINE WHICH DAVIS GAVE TO THE GNZ, THE EMBASSY, AND OTHERS IN WELLINGTON REFLECTS HIS STRONGLY HELD FREE ENTERPRISE PHILOSOPHY (COPIES BEING POUCHED TO THE DEPT.). IT DEFINES GOVERNMENT'S ROLE AS STIMULATING PRIVATE SECTOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE ECONOMY BY FISCAL INCENTIVES AND PROVISION OF INFRASTRUCTURE. THE PARTS MOST RELEVANT TO THE UNITED STATES RELATE TO FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT, INVESTMENT, TRADE, INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT, AND AIR SERVICES, ALL OF WHICH DAVIS RAISED WITH US. THE NEW PREMIER EMPHASIZED HIS GOVERNMENT'S INTEREST IN JOINT VENTURES WITH AMERICAN FISHERMEN, ACTIVATION OF THE U.S. AIRLINE ROUTE RIGHTS (POSSIBLY BY SPIA), AND HIS DESIRE TO LOWER TARIFFS TO ENCOURAGE TRADE WITH HAWAII AND TO MAKE POSSIBLE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF U.S.-OWNED ASSEMBLY PLANTS WHICH MIGHT BE ATTRACTED BY THE ISLANDS' LOW COST LABOR. ALSO MENTIONED IN THE NEW ECONOMIC PROGRAM OUTLINE, BUT NOT TOUCHED ON BY DR. DAVIS IN HIS DISCUS-

SIONS WITH US, ARE A NUMBER OF POSSIBILITIES FOR U.S. SALES OF INFRASTRUCTURAL COMPONENTS, NOTABLY TELE-COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT, REFRIGERATION UNITS FOR FISH STORAGE, AND VARIOUS HARBOR, AIRFIELD, WATER SYSTEM, AND ELECTRIC POWER IMPROVEMENTS. THE ECONOMIC PROGRAM OUTLINE ALSO NOTES THAT THE COOK ISLANDS GOVERNMENT WELCOMES DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE FROM BOTH BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL AID PARTNERS.

4. NAVAL VISITS:

DR. DAVIS WAS EXTREMELY ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THE VISIT OF

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CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD AND ICA ADVISER

THE USS HORNE (AUGUST 3 - 7). THE HORNE, WHICH WAS THE FIRST U.S. NAVY SHIP TO CALL IN THE COOKS SINCE THEY ACHIEVED SELF-GOVERNMENT IN 1965, ARRIVED AT A MOST OPPORTUNE TIME. THE NEW GOVERNMENT HAD JUST BEEN INSTALLED AND THE ANNUAL "INDEPENDENCE" CELEBRATIONS WERE IN FULL SWING. JUST AS THE HORNE FIRED A 21-GUN SALUTE, ASHORE THE FLAG WENT UP FOR THE PRINCIPAL CEREMONY OF THE WEEK-LONG CELEBRATION, AND SHORTLY THERE-

AFTER THE NEW CABINET WAS ENTERTAINED AT A LUNCHEON ABOARD. ACCORDING TO ONE CREW MEMBER, IT WAS HARD TO TELL WHO ENJOYED THE VISIT MORE, THE CREW OR THE ISLANDERS. THE NEW PREMIER URGED US TO SEND MORE SHIPS AND SAID THAT THIS INCLUDES NUCLEAR POWERED VESSELS (NPW). SINCE THE COOK ISLANDS GOVERNMENT IS A MEMBER OF THE CONFIDENTIAL

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SOUTH PACIFIC FORUM, A POSSIBLE FOCUS FOR RENEWED DISCUSSION OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC NUCLEAR FREE ZONE PROPOSAL, AN NPW VISIT THERE WOULD PROVIDE POLITICALLY USEFUL SUPPORT FOR OUR WORLDWIDE AND REGIONAL NPW ACCESS POLICIES. THE PRESENT ANCHORAGE IS, UNFORTUNATELY, SMALL AND THERE ARE NO ALONG-SIDE FACILITIES. DAVIS, WHO HAS A PERSONAL INTEREST IN HARBOR DESIGN (HE CLAIMS HE HAS ACTUALLY DONE THIS WORK), VOLUNTEERED TO HAVE ADDITIONAL SOUNDINGS MADE TO INCREASE THE SIZE OF THE ANCHORAGE. AMBASSADOR SELDEN, IN TURN, OFFERED THE ASSISTANCE OF HIS NAVAL ATTACHE, CAPTAIN SEMPLE, IF THE LATTER COULD CONTRIBUTE TO THE PROCESS.

5. CORRUPTION PROSECUTIONS:

THOUGH THE COOK ISLANDS POLICE SUPERINTENDENT TOLD THE LLESS THAT HE HOPED TO COMPLETE HIS INVESTIGATIONS BY MID-AUGUST, THERE HAVE BEEN NO ANNOUNCEMENTS ABOUT CRIMINAL PROSECUTIONS AGAINST SIR ALBERT OR ANY MEMEBER OF HIS COOK ISLANDS PARTY (CIP) OR AGAINST FINBAR KENNY. WE THINK IT MOST UNLIKELY THAT THE NEW GOVERNMENT WILL PROCEED AGAINST KENNY BECAUSE OF ITS DEPENDENCE ON THE MILLION DOLLARS OF STAMP REVENUE WHICH KENNY BRINGS IN ANNUALLY. WHETHER IT WILL PRESS CHARGES AGAINST THE OTHERS IS PROBLEMATIC, BUT, BARRING PROVOCATION BY THE CIP, IT APPEARS LESS LIKELY AS TIME GOES ON.

6. PENRHYN ISLAND METEOROLOGICAL PROJECT:

DR. DAVIS INFORMED US THAT ONE OF THE FIRST ACTS OF HIS CABINET WAS TO APPROVE THE PENRHYN ISLAND PROJECT. FINAL APPROVAL IS STILL TO COME FROM THE GNZ, BUT WE ANTICIPATE NO PROBLEMS (SEE REF C).

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7. BIOGRAPHIC DATA:

SHORTLY AFTER THE CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT IN THE COOK ISLANDS, WE SUBMITTED UP-DATED BIOGRAPHIC DATA ON DR. DAVIS WHICH INCLUDES A COMMENT THAT HIS ATTITUDE TOWARD THE U.S. IS UNKNOWN (REF C). AS A RESULT OF OUR CONVERSATIONS WITH HIM, WE CAN NOW FIRMLY STATE THAT HIS ATTITUDE TOWARD THE U.S. IS EXTREMELY POSITIVE. HIS ECONOMIC PHILOSOPHY IS CLEARLY THAT OF FREE ENTERPRISE. POLITICALLY HE IS A CONVINCED DEMOCRAT AND IN THE AREA OF SECURITY HE HAS NO QUALMS ABOUT COOPERATION WITH THE UNITED STATES. HE ALSO MADE CLEAR HIS ATTITUDE TOWARD THE SOVIET UNION. ASKED BY THE PRESS ABOUT THE POSSIBLE PARTNERS IN JOINT FISHING VENTURES, HE RULED OUT JUST ONE COUNTRY, THE USSR.

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